UNICEF and Peacebuilding

Hilde Frafjord Johnson
Informal Briefing to the Executive Board
1 November 2010
• Peacebuilding is not new to UNICEF
• At core of GA Resolution founding UNICEF (1946)
• Nobel Peace Prize (1965)

Protecting children from the impact of armed conflict is everyone's responsibility — governments, international organizations and every element of civil society. (…) For our children have a right to peace.

Graca Machel in “Impact of Armed Conflict on Children”, 1994
This presentation will look at:

- **Why** we do peacebuilding
- **How** we do peacebuilding
- **What** we do in peacebuilding
- **Where** we can do better
• Children devastated by conflict: 2 out of 3 children dying in conflict populations
• Conflict-affected countries most behind on MDGs: 22 out of 34
• Post-conflict countries prone to relapse: need to address root causes
  • We cannot hide from conflict dynamics
  • Children benefit most from peace
  • Children and youth have a role to play
UNICEF’s role in peacebuilding increasing

• Half of UNICEF expenditure goes to 19 conflict-, fragility-affected countries, an investment to reach bottom quintile

• UNICEF a key partner and player in peacebuilding: quality programmes, presence, operational, strong voice

• UNICEF’s unique role validated by the SG Report on Peacebuilding (2009) – core contribution in basic social services
• Create new, inclusive **social compact** (WDR) – common element for success in post-conflict countries

• Application of human-rights based approach, “**do no harm**” principles to ensure conflict sensitive programming

• Peacebuilding for UNICEF: means strengthening what we do well, not doing more, **but doing better:**
  - Conflict analysis, conflict-sensitive approach
  - Capacity development
  - Partnerships
• Peacebuilding is **multidimensional**: political, security, economic, social interventions addressing direct and indirect causes of conflict;

• SG Report identifies **5 peacebuilding priority areas** and UNICEF contributes to all of them.

• **UNICEF value added** and thrust is basic **social services** and **peace dividends**:

  Child friendly schools/spaces, life skills, peace education, back-to-school, FTI in fragile contexts, immunization days
Our work in the other four peacebuilding areas:

- **Safety/Security**: Mine risk education, child combatants, police/peacekeeper training
- **Core Government Functions**: Capacity development at ministerial, subnational levels
- **Economic**: Youth, life skills, livelihoods, social protection
- **Political/Reconciliation**: Youth, peace education, advocacy
Where we can do better:

• UNICEF programmes contributing to peacebuilding widespread and varied, but ad hoc and not systematic and strategic

• Need for more coherence both within UNICEF and as part of UN family

• More consistent and institutionalized approach: develop conflict analysis, programme guidance note, capacity and skills, mainstream peacebuilding, support to COs/ROs

• Continue work at global policy level: influence policies in favor of children
Sustainable peace can only be built when:

- it is an inclusive compact
- peace dividends reach the most vulnerable
- young people have a future

UNICEF has a critical role to play in peacebuilding
Thank you